

CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OF LGUs IN TAWI-TAWI: TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE SOCIO- ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL AGENDA

Bobby T. Dagbusan

*Research Scholar, College of Public Administration and Development Studies, Western Mindanao State University,
Zamboanga, Philippines*

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ABSTRACT

This is a descriptive quantitative correlational research design with eighty (80) local government executives such as municipal councilors, mayors and vice mayors from eight (8) island municipalities as the participants selected through total enumeration. To measure the challenges and prospects of leadership development, an inventory questionnaire was administered to the respondents, a Development Rating Scale was used which was analyzed and measured using standard deviation, mean, Pearson Correlation Coefficient, T-test, and ANOVA. The questions posited in the study are the following: What are the leadership development challenges encountered by the local government executives of Tawi-Tawi province? Is there a significant relationship between internal leadership challenges and prospects of leadership development? Is there a significant relationship between external leadership challenges and prospects of leadership development? Is there a significant difference in the internal leadership challenges encountered by the local government executives when data are grouped according to gender, family income, and educational attainment, Is there a significant difference in the external leadership challenges encountered by the local government executives when data are grouped according to gender, family income, and educational attainment, Is there a significant difference in the prospects of leadership development when data are classified according to gender, family income, and educational attainment. The results of the study transparently indicated that the respondents in this study demonstrated high challenges in both internal and external challenges of development.

KEYWORDS: *Quantitative Correlational Research Design, Demonstrated High Challenges, Socio-Economic and Political Dimensions*

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The island province of Tawi-Tawi is one of the most challenged provinces in the Philippines. Basic services seem to be inadequate. Activities of local settlers and private business sectors have contributed to the destruction of its virgin forests and marine environment (NSO Nationwide Data Bank and Information Service Division, April 2013).

This is precisely why there is a need to strengthen the foundation of the socio-economic and political dimensions of the province so as to address the problems it is confronted with. Moreover, development is critical and essential to the sustenance and growth of any nation. A country is classified as developed when it is able to provide a high quality of life

for her citizenry. The pride of any government is the attainment of higher value level of development in such a way that its citizens would derive natural attachment to governance. However, for a nation to be in a phase of development there must be some prerequisite, which includes socio-economic and political stability.

As a matter of fact, the local government is at the core of service delivery. It is the sphere of government closest to the people. The fundamental function of local government is to provide basic services to its citizens in a viable and sustainable manner. Within the context of a developmental state, the developmental local government calls for new knowledge, skills, and competencies from those in leadership positions in municipalities to promote service delivery to its constituency. Developmental local government requires political leadership which creates opportunities to account to the community over and above regular elections. In this regard, therefore, the role of councilors as political leaders in local government is significant as councilors are elected to provide political direction and leadership in municipalities (Nkwana, 2012).

It should be noted that for local government, specifically in the province of Tawi-Tawi to play its full role in supporting the new dimension of good governance, it needs to be politically empowered. In fact, decentralization of governance functions to local government is on-going in our country. To be fully effective, according to Megele (2012), local government management and service delivery capacity need to be strong, and resources need to be adequate. In some of the “big bang” devolutions, funding and capacity support and development does not always follow the devolution of powers, leaving sub-national governments struggling to cope with the burden of providing even the basic social services.

Incremental political innovation is important to help cities and provinces improve the things they are already doing. However, as Peter Drucker would say, “leadership is not just about doing things right, but also about doing the right things”. A robust innovation practice employs a range of tools, such as human-centered design and partnerships with outside entities, to help cities constantly challenge, rethink and refine what they are doing and why. Breakthrough innovation is one of the core duties of local government, right alongside day-to-day work and continuous improvement. But cities and provinces struggle with how to organize, staff, resource and support these activities so they can happen in tandem (Jacob, 2014).

Hence, this study envisioned to identify the frontiers of challenges and prospects relative to leadership development. Thus, this study was conceptualized to explore the challenges and prospects of leadership development towards a sustainable political and economic agenda among the local government executives in the island province of Tawi-Tawi, and to determine what challenges they may encounter and the prospects of leadership development they may venture into, and how those challenges and prospects may impact on the leadership development among these local government executives.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive quantitative correlational research design. It sought to determine the different challenges and prospects of leadership development among local government executives in the island province of Tawi-Tawi and its implications towards a sustainable political and economic agenda; it aimed to determine the relationship between challenges of leadership development and prospects of leadership development of the respondents. It also aimed

to determine the degrees of differences in the respondents' challenges of leadership development; as well as the degree of differences in the respondents' prospects of leadership development when data were grouped according to gender, family income, and educational attainment.

This study went through the following stages:

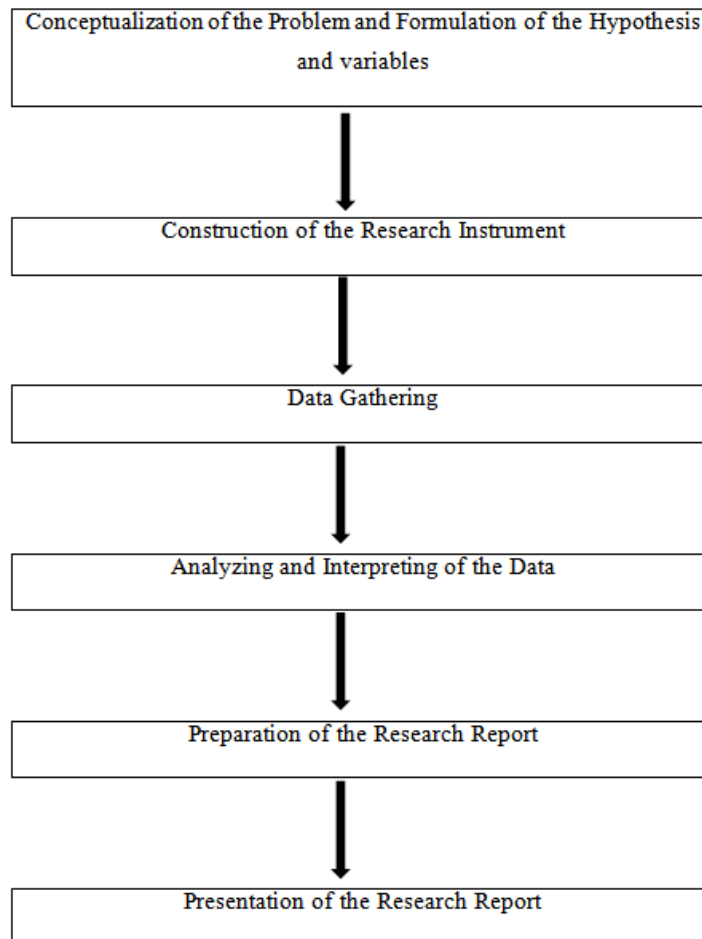


Figure 2: A Work Flowchart of the Study

Research Locale

The island province of Tawi-Tawi is a swathe of 307 islands, islets and reefs located in the south-southwest of the Philippine archipelago and it is about 180 miles from Zamboanga City. Geographically, it is bounded by Sabah, Malaysia, about 15 miles from Sitangkai Island to the southwest separated by sea. International cargo and container ships are passing through this province along the sea lane of the Sulu Sea at the outer sea bed of the Tubba Taha reef. To the south is Sumatra and to the east is the Celebes Sea. To the northeast is Siasi and Jolo islands. It has a total population of more than 450,000 where 85 percent of the population is the Sama group of people and about 7 percent Badjaos or sea gypsies, 5 percent are Tausugs and another 2 percent Chinese. (Tan & Resurreccion. Tawi-Tawi, The Southernmost Frontier, 2001)

The province of Tawi-Tawi consists of 11 municipalities. Majority of these island municipalities are separated by sea. The mode of transportation to these municipalities is the so-called kumpit or lansa (wooden motor boat). The main livelihoods of the people are agar-agar planting and fishing. More than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the population is government workers/employees. A few residents are engaged in business. The literacy rate is about 80%. (Highlights of the Philippines Population Census, 2015).

Population and Sampling Design

Total enumeration was employed to gather the data. In this study, 80 local government executives such as mayors, vice mayors and municipal councilors from eight (8) island municipalities were the participants of the study. The participants were selected on the basis of peace and order situations and the accessibility in traveling to these island municipalities.

Data Gathering Tools

To measure the challenges and prospects of leadership development, an inventory questionnaire was administered to the respondents. The first part of the instrument covered the personal background information of the respondents such as gender, monthly family income and educational attainment/level of education. The second part of the instrument consisted of two sections: Section-A, from numbers 1-25 was a questionnaire on the challenges of leadership development, and Section-B, from numbers 26-50 is a questionnaire on the prospects of leadership development. The instrument was a 5-point Likert scale marked Very High Challenge (5), High Challenge (4), Moderate Challenge (3), Low Challenge (2), and Very Low Challenge (1)

Validity and Reliability

To determine the validity of the research instrument, the researcher sought the concordance of the three panels of experts as to the items to be included in the said instrument and the three experts were in accord that the instrument was valid.

After validation, the research instrument was pilot-tested to another group of respondents – the Zamboanga City councilors. The results of the pilot testing was subjected to a statistical tool using Cronbach alpha to determine its reliability. The test showed that the instrument was reliable at .88.

Data Gathering Procedure

After the instruments had been prepared, the research proponent sought permission from the different mayors through their vice mayors in the eight island municipalities for the administration of the research instrument. After approval, the researcher made an appointment with the municipal mayors, municipal vice mayors, and the municipal councilors and explained to them that they are part of the ongoing research work undertaken by the researcher and to seek their consent as participants of the study. Once their consent was given, the researcher then administered the instrument to these local government executives. The data gathered using the research instrument were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted.

Method of Data Analysis

Scoring Procedure for the Challenges and Prospects on Leadership Development

As a standard scoring procedure, the respondents were asked to answer the leadership challenges and prospects inventory questionnaire. The raw scores or responses of each respondent using the self-rating research instrument would be computed. These scores were computed by multiplying the weight and the frequency. The total score was the basis for determining the challenges and prospects of leadership development of the respondents.

The leadership inventory questionnaire was a uni-dimensional five-point Likert scale categorized into two components. The analysis and scoring procedure was by components. The analysis by components was based on the average mean scores obtained from the average mean scores of the statements for each component.

Below is a rating scale scorecards for Challenges and Prospects of leadership development.

Table 1: Challenges and Prospects on Leadership Development Rating Scale

Scores	Description
4 – 4.99	Very High Challenge
3 – 3.99	High Challenge
2 – 2.99	Moderate Challenge
1 – 1.99	Low Challenge
0 – .99	Very Low Challenge

Statistical Treatments of Data

After administering the research instrument to the respondents, the data gathered were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted using the following statistical tools:

- To answer research questions number one (1) and two (2), the percentage was used to determine the respondents' challenges of leadership development and prospects of leadership development.
- To answer research question numbers 3 and 4, Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient was used to determine the relationship between challenges of leadership development and prospects of leadership development.
- To answer research questions number 5 to 7, two statistical tests were used. Firstly, T-test for the independent sample was used to determine if male and female respondents vary in the challenges and prospects of leadership development. Secondly, One Way Analysis of Variance was used to determine if the respondents differ in the challenges and prospects of leadership development when data are grouped according to family, income and educational attainment.

Table 2: Summary of Statistical Tool Used in the Study

What are the leadership development challenges encountered by the local government executives of Tawi-Tawi province?	No Hypothesis	Frequency and Percentage
What are the prospects of leadership development given the challenges encountered by these local government executives?	No Hypothesis	Frequency and Percentage
Is there a significant relationship between leadership challenges and prospects of leadership development?	There is a significant relationship between leadership challenges and prospects of leadership development	Pearson Product Moment Coefficient
Is there a significant difference in the leadership challenges encountered by the local executives when data are grouped according to gender, family income, and educational attainment?	There is a significant difference in the leadership challenges encountered by the local executives when data are grouped according to gender, family income and educational attainment	t-test for Independent Sample, ANOVA
Is there a significant difference in the prospects of leadership development when data are classified according to gender, family income, and educational attainment?	There is a significant difference in the prospects of leadership development when data are classified according to gender, family income and educational attainment	t-test for Independent Sample, ANOVA

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary, findings, conclusions, and recommendation of the study.

Summary

This study aimed to determine the challenges and prospects of leadership development of LGUs in Tawi-Tawi: Towards a sustainable socio-economic and political agenda.

The major questions answered in this study were based on the hypothesis: (1) There is a significant relationship between internal leadership challenges and prospects of leadership development (2) There is a significant relationship between external leadership challenges and prospects of leadership development, (3) There is a significant difference in the internal leadership challenges encountered by the local government executives when data are grouped according to gender, family income, and educational attainment, (4) There is a significant difference in the external leadership challenges encountered by the local government executives when data are grouped according to gender, family income, and educational attainment, and (5) There is a significant difference in the prospects of leadership development when data are classified according to gender, family income, and educational attainment.

The study employed descriptive quantitative correlational research design. It sought to determine the relationship between internal leadership challenges and prospects of development and between external challenges and prospects of development in the island province of Tawi-Tawi.

Statistical tests used in this study include mean, percentages, standard deviation, t-test for independent samples and analysis of variance.

Findings

This study yielded the following results:

On the Percentage Distribution on Internal Challenges of Development.

A majority, 77.4 % of the respondents' believe that the delivery of basic services as a *very high challenge*, while only 22.6 % of these respondents considered delivery of basic services as a *high challenge*. On average, 53.1 % of the respondents believe that engaging citizens is considered a very high challenge. On average, 56 % of the respondents believe that socio-economic demographics is considered as a *very high challenge* perhaps because of the variation in the socio-economic strata among the population.

On Percentage Distribution on External Challenges of Development

On the average, 54.4 % of the respondents consider lack of financial allocation as a *very high challenge*, while 56.8 % believe that forming new partnerships is considered to be a *very high challenge*.

On the Correlation Matrix between Internal Challenges and Prospects of Development

A significant relationship was observed between internal challenges and prospects of development. This implies that respondents who have rated delivery of basic services, engaging citizens and socio-economic demographics have also high prospects of development in their respective local government units.

On the Correlation Matrix between External Challenges and Prospects of Development

There exists a relationship between external challenges and prospects of development. This further implies that respondents who have rated lack of financial allocation and forming new partnerships as *very high challenge* likewise believe that prospects of development can be very high too.

On the Respondents' Differences in Internal Challenges of Development by Gender

Respondents' perception did not vary on internal challenges. This implies that respondents of both sexes did not differ significantly on their perception of the internal challenges such as the delivery of basic services, engaging citizens and socio-economic demographics. This further implies that gender does not influence respondents' ratings on internal challenges.

On the Differences in the Respondents' Internal Challenges of Development by Income

The respondents differ significantly along with the components of internal challenges when they are grouped according to income. In other words, family income influences the internal challenges of development.

On the Differences in the Respondents' Internal Challenges of Development by Educational Attainment

Educational attainment is a factor influencing the internal challenges of development long the component socio-economic demographics.

On the Differences in the Respondents' External Challenges of Development by Gender

Male and female respondents do not differ significantly in the external challenges of development. Both have high external challenges. In other words, sex is not a factor influencing the respondent's external challenges of development.

On the Differences in the Respondents' External Challenges of Development by Family Income.

The respondents differ significantly in the external challenges of development on lack of financial allocation. This implies that income has shown to have influenced the external challenges.

On the Differences in the Respondents' External Challenges of Development by Educational Attainment

The respondents do not vary significantly in the external challenges of development along with the two components: LFA and FNP. In other words, educational attainment is not a factor affecting or influencing the external challenges of development.

On the Differences in the Respondents' Prospects of Development by Gender

Both respondents do not differ significantly in the prospects of leadership development. Thus, gender does not influence the prospects of leadership development.

On the Differences in the Respondents' Prospects of Development by Family Income.

The result of the data is not significant but meaningful. To be meaningful, according to Pedhazur (1997), its p-value is greater than .05 but less than .20. It means that there are sufficient reasons not to drop off or discard such variable but to affirm and disaffirm its future contributions in any research study.

On the Differences in the Respondents' Prospects of Development by Educational Attainment

The data shows no empirical evidence that it is significant but meaningful. To be meaningful according to Pedhazur (1997), its p-value is greater than .05 but less than .20. It means that there are enough reasons not to drop off or discard such variable but to affirm and disaffirm its future contributions in any research study.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the aforementioned findings, it can be logically inferred that the respondents in this study demonstrated high challenges in both internal and external challenges of development. Empirical evidence clearly shows that there exists a relationship between internal and external challenges with that of prospects of development, that is, those who have perceived high challenges in development both internal and external have also high prospects about development in their respective localities. While male and female respondents do not vary in the internal challenges, family income and educational attainment have shown to have influenced these variables. Moreover, only family income and educational attainment have an impact on the external challenges of development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the aforementioned findings, it is recommended that:

- Delivery of basic services should be given priority by the local government executives such as Housing, Education, Health care, Social welfare, Transport, Electricity and energy, Water, Sanitation and Refuse and waste removal.
- Engage the citizens in the strategic development of the municipality, formulate area development plans based on the watershed, river basins and other ecosystems as units of planning. Plan investments in economic activities of

all scales with explicit stocktaking of the natural resource base and its carrying capacity in the ecosystem that will host the investments. Address gaps and weaknesses in the value chain: Fill gaps, reinforce weak links, and make more inclusive the various key product value-chains, with the end in view of reducing costs, diffusing market concentration, improving producer prices, linking lagging areas to growth centers, and broadening the base of the rural economy. Pursue massive enterprise development: Undertake a massive and government-wide effort supported by nongovernment sectors for enterprise development, especially of micro, small and medium enterprises all across Mindanao. Broaden and deepen the agriculture/agribusiness sector: Promote greater diversity and increased value adding in the range of agricultural and fishery products produced in Mindanao, as continuing linchpins for broad-based Mindanao development. Promote a vibrant services sector via trade, tourism, and ICT-based services: Undertake focused initiatives to strengthen these three strategic services subsectors as key job generators, and hence drivers of inclusive growth in Mindanao. Widen Mindanao's industrial base: Provide the enabling environment for increased industrial activity over the medium to long-term. Pursue win-win approaches towards ecological integrity and economic development, through the conscious pursuit of environmentally friendly production and consumption, and through the promotion of mechanisms for payments for ecological services (PES).

- Reduce the socio-economic inequality among the populace in the municipalities such as good health and overall well-being among the entire population, where families enjoy easy access to responsive health care systems and financing that appropriate to local contexts and cultures. Maximum access to quality, relevant, and culturally sensitive education for all, enabling people to affirm both local cultures and universal values, and gain knowledge and skills that are appropriate to real life and global challenges. Empowered communities that assert their distinct identities and share social values that promote the common good; provide opportunities for personal growth and oblige collective accountability, and possess the wherewithal to resolve internal conflict and inspire active participation in the public life.
- Budget as one of the most potent tools for achieving socio-economic growth can only be catalyzed by good governance, therefore, for responsive, transparent and accountable local government, it is recommended for the local government units to review and revisit the process of implementing as well as the applicability of the National Budget Operation Manual, a policy standard to enhance financial Planning.

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